



Ballot measures

Proposition No. 1 CLARK COUNTY HOME RULE CHARTER

Proposition No. 1 proposes a Home Rule Charter government for Clark County. This proposition would replace the current form of county government with a government formed under the Washington Constitution, Article XI, Section 4. The Charter provides that the assessor, auditor, clerk, treasurer, and sheriff are partisan offices elected countywide. It provides for the adoption of a code of ethics to apply to all officers and employees of the county; limits most emergency ordinances to sixty days; provides for a review and amendment of the Charter itself; and provides for the transition from the existing form of government to the Charter form of government.

The Charter provides the citizens the opportunity to vote separately on alternative articles relating to the number of county commissioners; whether the county commissioners should be nominated and elected countywide or by district only; and whether the Charter should or should not include a provision which grants to the citizens of Clark County the powers of initiative and referendum.

SHOULD THE HOME RULE CHARTER BE APPROVED? **YES** . . . ☐

SHOULD THE HOME RULE CHARTER BE APPROVED? **NO** . . . ☐

Statement for:

What is the current situation?

Currently our county government operates under 1889 Washington State Constitution guidelines. Since 1889 our population and needs have significantly increased. To accommodate growing counties, a provision was added in the state constitution to allow the development of a home rule charter.

What is a charter?

A charter is a vehicle for change. It allows the people to modify their local government as the need arises. Today we have very little power to change our government. Without permission from Olympia, we are confined by the rules set down in the 1889 state constitution.

How is change accomplished?

The first step is to approve the charter. This charter, developed over 18 months by 21 elected freeholders, is intended to give the citizens a voice in the structure the government will take. The citizens are offered choices in the number of commissioners, the manner in which they are elected and the option of initiative and referendum.

What is the ultimate outcome?

A yes vote for the charter will ultimately result in the return of power to the voters. The voter has final say in what the charter will look like and how it will affect government.

A yes vote opens the door for local control over how our county responds to the needs of the citizens.

A yes vote puts power back into the hands of Clark county citizens instead of Olympia legislatures.

Submitted by: Pro Home Rule Charter Committee
Tammy Mackey, Michael Thomson, Vern Veysey

Rebuttal of statement against:

The opposition wishes to use paranoia to sway your opinion. Don't be fooled. Nineteen of twenty elected freeholders recommend this charter, the first to be considered by Clark County voters. One should view local control of local issues not as a threat, but as an opportunity, an opportunity for voter involvement. Without a charter, county government leads the masses with limited recourse for change. With a charter, the voter leads county government. Please vote *yes!*

Written by:
Tammy Mackey
Michael Thomson
Vern Veysey

Proposition No. 1 explanatory statement :

Article XI, Section 4 of the State Constitution provides the option for citizens within counties to adopt a Home Rule Charter which replaces the current form of government with a form of government as determined by the voters of Clark County. The Charter does not change the role and authority of counties, but does allow voters in a county to provide a different form of county government than is prescribed by state law. The Charter provides that the assessor, auditor, clerk, treasurer, and sheriff will be elected countywide to partisan office; calls for the adoption of a code of ethics to apply to all officers and employees of the county; limits most emergency ordinances to sixty days; provides for a review and amendment of the Charter itself; and provides for the transition from the existing form of government to the Charter form of government.

The Charter provides that the voters will, by separate ballot propositions, determine if the number of county commissioners should be increased from three to five commissioners; if such commissioners should be elected countywide or by district; and whether direct governmental powers should be reserved to the citizens which would be provided through the process of initiative and referendum.

Proposition Nos. 2, 3, and 4 will be effective only if the Home Rule Charter (Proposition No. 1) is approved by the Voters.

Statement against:

Home Rule has already been voted down in Clark County twice before – in 1982 and 1997. Recently, it was rejected in Kitsap, Cowlitz and Skamania Counties. No county has approved a Home Rule Charter in the past 15 years.

Clark County currently enjoys a clean, efficient government that has won many awards for innovation. Surveys show a 66% approval rating.

Home Rule will result in conflict, corruption and expensive court costs that will take money from taxpayer's pockets. It also opens a Pandora's Box for changes that are bought with outside special interest money, the same thing that is destroying our election system now. Citizens have demanded campaign finance reform to limit these influences. Doesn't our county deserve the same protection?

In designing the charter, the Freeholders left no way for citizens to revoke Home Rule if they don't like it. Charter provisions make it difficult or impossible to withdraw bad laws that may have unintended consequences. This isn't what we want for our county government. Vote *no* on Home Rule.

For more information, contact: NoHomeRule Committee; Email: nohomerule@attbi.com; Web Site: <http://nohomerule.home.attbi.com>

Written by:
Carrie Parks

Rebuttal of statement for:

The Freeholder's Committee didn't adequately study the risks of Home Rule before submitting its charter to this vote. The charter will disrupt government and create conflict without really giving citizens more power or choice. Special-interest groups will have more influence than citizens. A majority of Clark County citizens are satisfied with our county government, so if it ain't broke, don't fix it!

Vote *no* on Home Rule.

Written by:
Carrie Parks & Tom Armstrong,
co-chairs